

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended) ~~The use~~ A method of identifying inhibitors of an activator-independent MurD enzyme comprising in a screening assay to identify inhibitors of the enzyme, ~~which assay comprises~~ contacting the enzyme with a test compound in the presence of enzyme substrates and appropriate buffers and detecting any modulation of enzyme activity by the test compound.
2. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in claim 1,~~ wherein the activator-independent MurD enzyme comprises an amino acid sequence wherein one or more of the amino acid residues G96, A112, A116, V126, L129, M133, G296, P298 and V422 is a variant amino acid residue.
3. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in claim 2,~~ and wherein the activator-independent MurD enzyme comprises an amino acid sequence having one or more of the amino acid residues K96, C112, G116, T126, M129, L133, N296, S298 and I422.
4. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in claim 1,~~ and wherein the activator-independent MurD enzyme is an *E. faecalis* MurD enzyme.
5. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in claim 1~~ and wherein the activator-independent MurD enzyme comprises the amino acid sequence:

MKKITTYQNK KVLVLGLAKS GVSAAKLLHE LGALVTVNDA KQFDQNPDAQ
DLLTLGIRVV TGGHPIELLD EEFELIVKNP GIPYTNPLVA EALTRKIPII
TEVELAGQIA ECPIVGITGT NGKTTTTTMI GLLLNADRTA GEARLAGNIG
FPASTVAQEA TAKDDLVMEL SSFQLMGIET FHPQIAVITN IFEAHLDYHG
SRKEYVAAKW AIQKNMTVED TLILNWNQVE LQTLAKTTAA NVLPFSTKEA
VEGAYLLDGK LYFNEEYIMP ADELGIPGSH NIENALAAIC VAKLKNVSNV
QIRQTLKNFS GVPHRTQFVG EVQQRRFYND SKATNILATE MALSGFDNQK
LLLAGGLDR GNSFDELVPA LLGLKAIVLF GETKEKLAEA AKKANIETIL

FAENVQTAVT IAFDYSEKDD TILLSPACAS WDQYPNFEVR GEAFMQAVQQ
LKESEM or a sequence having at least 85% sequence identity therewith.

6. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in any preceeding claim 1, and~~ wherein the activator-independent MurD enzyme has up to 16 amino acids removed from the N-terminus[[,]] or up to 12 amino acids removed from the C-terminus[[,]] of the amino acid sequence.
7. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in any preceeding claim 1, and~~ wherein the enzyme substrates are UDP-MurNac-L-Ala, D-Glutamate and ATP.
8. (currently amended) The method of ~~as claimed in any preceeding claim 1, and~~ wherein the enzyme is pre-incubated with the test compound before contacting it with the substrates.